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Identical letters dated 3 July 2017 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I should like to convey to you the following information:

Over the past few days, the United States of America has waged a misleading media campaign, claiming that the Syrian Arab Republic intends to carry out a chemical-weapon attack against Syrian civilians.

The Syrian Arab Republic underscores that any claims in that regard made by the White House and other official United States agencies are nothing but empty allegations that are completely false and not based on facts or evidence. Just as in the case of the 7 April 2017 attack against Sha'irat airbase, the aim in making such claims is to establish a spurious pretext that would justify another American aggression against Syria and to cover up the crimes of the illegitimate so-called international coalition led by the United States, which has killed thousands of innocent Syrian civilians and destroyed the infrastructure of Syria.

My Government would like to point out to you that, as usual, the misleading American statements come at a time when the Syrian Arab Army and its allies are making great strides in combating the armed terrorist groups that are supported by the United States of America and the Governments of certain allied States in the region and beyond. The purpose of these empty accusations and threats is to boost the morale of the terrorist organizations, prolong the Syrian crisis and curtail the prospects of arriving at a definitive solution to the crisis through the talks being held in Astana and Geneva, the latest round of which will start in the next few days.

The Syrian Arab Republic reiterates that it has irrevocably terminated its chemical weapons programme. This fact is attested to by the relevant specialized international agencies and supported by data they have provided. Syria stresses that it does not possess any chemical weapons, strongly condemns the use of such weapons in any place, for any purpose and under any pretext, and has never used any toxic chemicals since the crisis began. Syria furthermore reiterates that it has cooperated fully with the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) after it acceded to the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Independent analyses and studies conducted by senior analysts and experts in the United States of America, Europe and other countries have proven the falsehood of accusations that Syria used any type of chemical weapon in Khan Shaykhun on 4 April 2017. The refusal of the United States of America and its allies to allow the

conduct of an unbiased, transparent and objective investigation into what happened at Khan Shaykhun and Sha'irat airbase gives lie to their allegations and demonstrates their political foolhardiness. The Russian Federation, the Islamic Republic of Iran and other States called for an investigation immediately after the American attack against Sha'irat airbase, but the United States of America, the Governments of its allied States and its proxies refused to allow an investigation.

When the OPCW fact-finding mission visited Syria last week, my country's Government reiterated that it was fully prepared to help the mission reach Khan Shaykhun, but the mission was unable to do so because it could not obtain the approval of the armed terrorist groups in that area. Meanwhile, the United States and Western States refused to send a team from the fact-finding mission to Sha'irat airbase.

The Syrian Arab Republic condemns the claims and threats made by the United States and rejects them in their entirety. Syria stresses that any American attack against its territory, army and people is part and parcel of the ongoing support being given to armed terrorist groups and aimed at covering up what those groups have done to and the crimes that they have committed against the Syrian people. Such conduct contravenes the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations and Security Council resolutions concerning counter-terrorism. Syria once again calls on the international community to condemn the American attack against Sha'irat airbase and the crimes of the illegitimate so-called international coalition, which has killed innocent Syrian civilians and destroyed Syrian facilities and infrastructure.

I should be grateful if these identical letters could be issued as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Louay **Falouh**
Minister Counsellor
Chargé d'affaires a.i.